

March 30, 2020 "Don't touch your FACE, Keep in your SPACE."

2:00 PM

Big Horn County

COVID-19 Update/Response

For Immediate Release

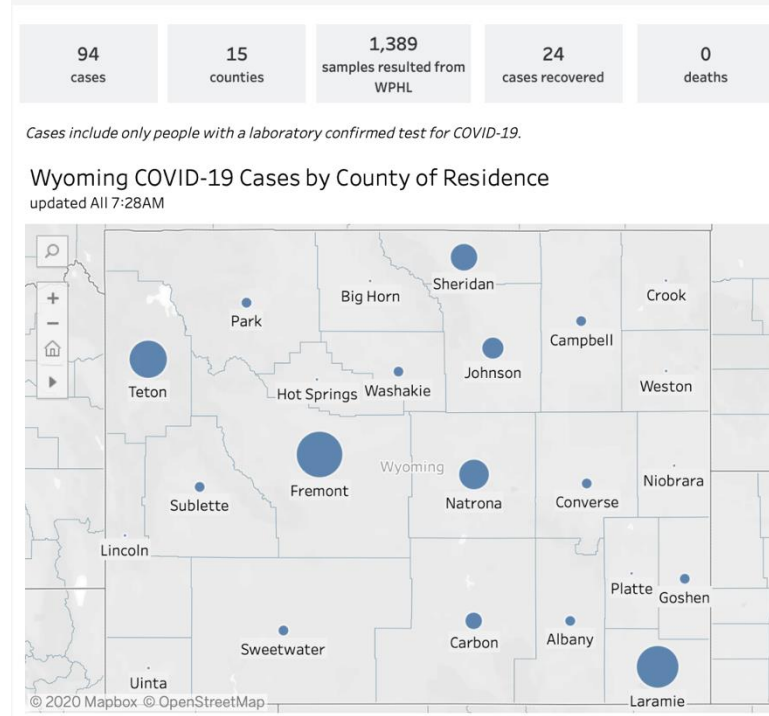
Today is National Doctors' Day. I wish to celebrate my physician father, uncles, cousins and my son-in-law and all of my physician colleagues that are on the front lines in every city and region of the world fighting this illness, risking exposure of themselves and their families to take care of the sick and afflicted.

I will once again update you on the status of COVID-19:

As of 7:28 am, we have 94 cases in Wyoming. We also have 24 people who have fully recovered and are not quarantined or hospitalized anymore. NO DEATHS. We still have NO CASES in Big Horn County, with 14 tested recently.



COVID-19 Map and Statistics



New York State, with over 53,300 cases as of Sunday morning, accounts for more than one-third of the country's known coronavirus infections. Extreme measures are in effect there with the hospital ship Comfort arriving today. The Governor of Florida is attempting to stop the influx of people from New York and the surrounding states.



Somber Predictions From Experts

IF WE DON'T TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY, as we have been advised. Anthony Fauci, MD, is predicting "millions" of coronavirus cases in the United States, with 100,000 to 200,000 deaths, [reports the Associated Press](#). Appearing on Sunday television news shows, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases director delivered a prognosis that would surpass the death toll of the annual [seasonal flu](#). Meanwhile, parts of the country that have been relatively untouched by the virus should prepare for that to change, said Deborah Birx, MD, head of the White House coronavirus task force. "No state, no metro area, will be spared," she said.

The Wyoming Department of Health issued an updated Health Alert Notice. The following pertains to all those with symptoms of COVID-19 who are not tested.

"Outpatients with symptoms compatible with COVID-19 who are not tested due to testing supply shortages and are recovering at home should be instructed by providers to isolate themselves until at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), AND at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. Household contacts of these patients should be asked to limit their public activities as much as possible for 14 days after incorporating precautions in the home, to monitor for symptoms, and to isolate themselves should symptoms develop. If household contacts are required to go to work, they should be asked to monitor their symptoms at least daily and to leave work immediately if symptoms develop."

People continue to ask why they aren't being tested. I have answered many by email, text, phone and social media. I know it is hard to understand that we don't have enough tests right now for everyone to get tested for testing sake. We would like more tests to better track the disease. However, we currently have more tests than testing capability. Although we are getting more capacity every week at the

Wyoming Public Health Lab (WPHL.) These tests take time in current state. They aren't like your home pregnancy tests that turn a color and then you know. We have to molecularly match the RNA sequence against the known gene. This is a timely process, but we are developing faster tests. The FDA just approved such a test, yet they can only make 10,000-50,000 per day beginning this Wednesday April 1. This is a new disease and we are learning as fast as we can. Please respect the priorities we have in place for testing and staying safe. We are working tirelessly to serve you.



Below are the testing priorities for now:

Because testing supplies and capacity is limited, the WPHL is prioritizing testing ***for patients for whom a result has important clinical management or public health implications.*** The testing priorities for the WPHL are the following:

1. Healthcare workers – so they can continue to care for the sick without exposing others
2. Hospitalized patients – so we can take additional precautions to not expose other patients
3. Residents of communal settings such as nursing homes or homeless shelters
4. Persons over the age of 65 or with chronic underlying medical conditions or persons with contact with persons over the age of 65 or with chronic underlying medical conditions
5. Close contacts of laboratory-confirmed cases.

Many individuals will not fall into any of the groups and therefore will NOT qualify for testing.

For most people, testing will not alter what we do to help you. As I mentioned before, this is not a “test us all so we can get on with our lives” situation. This will be our new reality for the next several weeks and months. I hope it is shorter. I wish it was different.

1. If you don't have symptoms, the test may not be positive even if you are infected. Early in the disease there may not be enough virus to be detected. This would give people a false sense of not needing to stay home if exposed. So, continue to stay at home and wash your hands.
2. If you do have symptoms (cough and fever), testing will not help us change what we do. You also need to stay home, rest and drink fluids, do as your doctor prescribes and the usual stuff to get better. And as mentioned above, “to isolate themselves until at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery.” Being in the hospital may put you at additional risk because that is where the sickest people will be.
3. If you are sick enough to be in the hospital OR you are already in the hospital or nursing home, then we need to know so we can take extra precautions so as not to expose the healthcare workers taking care of you or expose other patients near you.

Make a difference. STAY HOME.

All the county leaders strongly urge you to follow ***all three of the [State Health Orders](#), which as of Friday were extended until April 17th.***

And yesterday President Trump has urged to keep his recommendations in place until April 30th.

Please do your part to stop the spread of COVID-19. "Curb the Spread, Keep your Head."

Please listen to the [Governor's and First Lady's message](#):



DO THE FIVE, STAY ALIVE

Stay Home. Stay Distant. Stay Safe!
Counter COVID with Clean Counters!
Swerve the Curve!
Kick the Panic!
Curb the Spread, Keep your Head!
Stay Home on The Range, To Avoid the Strains!
Say your Prayers and Share your Cares.
"Don't touch your FACE, Keep in your SPACE."

If you need help finding a health care provider or additional information on COVID call **211**.

Anyone who feels that they may be at risk of harming themselves, or who knows of someone in immediate danger of harming themselves, should call **911**. Anyone experiencing suicidal thoughts is encouraged to call the U.S. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at [1-800-273-TALK \(8255\)](tel:1-800-273-TALK(8255)) or text "WYO" to **741-741** for the Crisis Text Line. Veterans can call:



DO THE FIVE STAY ALIVE

Help stop coronavirus

- 1 **HANDS** Wash them often
- 2 **ELBOW** Cough into it
- 3 **FACE** Don't touch it
- 4 **SPACE** Keep safe distance



Respectfully,

David Weston, Fairbanks, MD, FFAFP

Big Horn County Health Officer

Medical Commissioner, State Emergency Response Commission,
Wyoming Office of Homeland Security

Medical Director, Wyoming State Parks EMS

Chairman Wyoming EMS for Children

Medical Director, Shell Volunteer Fire Department & EMS

Medical Director, Big Horn County Search & Rescue

Medical Director, Antelope Butte Mountain Recreation Area & Ski Patrol



For Sources of Information on COVID-19:

1. [Big Horn County Public Health Website:](https://www.bighorncountywy.gov)
<https://www.bighorncountywy.gov>
2. Park County Public Health Coronavirus Information Line: 754-1870 or 527-1870 (**Updated regularly**). **Big Horn County may use this.**
3. Up to date announcements from Wyoming Department of Health as they are released [Wyoming Department of Health Website](#)
4. [CDC Website](#)
5. [Wyoming Department of Health State Orders](#)
6. **Rumor Control:** This FEMA page is to help the public distinguish between rumors and facts regarding the response to COVID-19.

